

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRAVDA ON "PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE"

REF: MOSCOW 13022

1. SEPTEMBER 13 PRAVDA RUNS LENGTHY ARTICLE BY V. BOL'SHAKOV UNDER HEADING "STRATEGISTS OF 'BLACK PROPAGANDA': CENTERS OF DISINFORMATION". PIECE IS ACROSS-THE-BOARD SWIPE AT WESTERN GOVERNMENT RADIO STATIONS (RL/RFE, VOA, BBC, DEUTSCHE WELLE, KOL YISROEL AND EVEN RADIO SWEDEN) FOR ALLEGED INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND RESURRECTION OF "PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE". PRESUME FULL TEXT AVAILABLE FBIS.

2. IN OUR VIEW, THE MAIN NEW ELEMENT WHICH DISTINGUISHES BOL'SHAKOV'S ARTICLE FROM OTHERS WHICH HAVE LAMBASTED RL/RFE IN PAST IS HIS CLEAR INCLUSION OF USIA AND VOA IN RANKS OF THOSE CARRYING OUT SUBVERSIVE, ANTI-SOVIET MISSION. BOL'SHAKOV FILLS UP ALMOST HALF HIS SPACE RECOUNTING HISTORY OF U.S. FOREIGN INFORMATION EFFORTS,
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TRACING AND CLOSELY IDENTIFYING THEM TO PERIOD OF COLD WAR AND SPIRIT OF "PASSIONATE ANTI-COMMUNISM", AND DESCRIBING USIA/VOA STRUCTURE AND PROGRAMS INCLUDING AGENCY'S RELATIONSHIP WITH RIAS. AUTHOR'S ATTEMPTS TO CONVEY IMPRESSION OF MAMMOTH PROPAGANDA MACHINE ASSEMBLED SPECIFICALLY TO UNDERMINE SOCIALISM ARE REMINISCENT OF RECENT BUT MUCH SHORTER PRAVDA COLUMN

ON USIA REORGANIZATION BY YURIY ZHUKOV (REFTEL).

3. REPEATEDLY, BOL'SHADKOV STRONGLY SUGGESTS CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USIA AND CIA, AS WHEN HE SAYS THAT "USIA CLOSELY COORDINATES THE ACTIVITY OF ITS RADIO SERVICES WITH THE SUBVERSIVE CIA RADIO STATIONS 'LIBERTY' AND 'FREE EUROPE'" AND THAT "THE U.S. GOVERNMENT LOOKS UPON THE RADIO NETWORK OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA AND RL/RFE AS A SINGLE WHOLE."

4. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, BOL'SHAKOV SPEAKS OF THE "INTENTION OF THE NEW (U.S.) ADMINISTRATION TO STEP UP THE 'PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR' AGAINST THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES," ALTHOUGH "EVEN THOSE, LIKE USIA, WHO ARE CARRYING IT OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH OFFICIALLY ADOPTED LAWS WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH THE TERM 'PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR'." AS EXAMPLES OF "PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR", BOL'SHAKOV TROTS OUT THE OLD STAND-BYS OF INTERFERENCE IN OTHERS' INTERNAL AFFAIRS, "THE SPREADING OF LIES AND SLANDERS ABOUT SOCIALISM", "WICKEDLY SLANDERING OUR REALITY," AND "THE CAMPAIGN UNDER THE PHONEY SLOGAN OF 'THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS'."

5. IN DESCRIBING VOA ACTIVITIES BOL'SHAKOV MADE INTERESTING SLIP WHICH WE FOUND TO BE AMUSING "EVIDENCE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF EFFECTIVENESS". BOL'SHAKOV CLAIMS VOA BROADCASTS "IN 36 LANGUAGES, INCLUDING FIVE LANGUAGES OF PEOPLES OF THE USSR." WE PRESUME HE GOT THIS FROM PRINTED VOA SCHEDULE LISTING PROGRAMS IN RUSSIAN, UKRAINIAN, GEORGIAN, ARMENIAN AND UZBEK. BOL'SHAKOV THEREFORE - DOUBTLESS UNWITTINGLY - IMPLIES AGREEMENT WITH US THAT ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA REALLY ARE NOT PART OF THE SOVIET UNION.

6. COMMENT: (A) ALTHOUGH VOA WAS OCCASIONALLY REFERRED TO IN PASSING DURING MAJOR SOVIET MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST RL/RFE IN EARLY MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, BOL'SHAKOV'S PRAVDA PIECE IS THE FIRST TIME IN RECENT MEMORY THAT USIA AND THE VOICE HAVE BEEN SO SPECIFICALLY SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION AND VIRTUAL ONE-TO-ONE IDENTIFICATION WITH RL/RFE. ALTHOUGH HE NEVER SAYS SO IN SO MANY WORDS, BOL'SHAKOV'S CLEAR INFERENCE IS THAT USIA IS A MAIN CENTER OF WHAT HE CALLS "PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE" AGAINST USSR. PUT TOGETHER WITH ZHUKOV'S COMMENTARY OF JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE (REFTEL), SOVIETS SEEM TO BE SAYING THAT THEY EXPECT REORGANIZED USIA OR SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO BE MORE CENTRALIZED AND MORE AGGRESSIVE INSTRUMENT OF ANTI-SOVIET PROPAGANDA.

(B) ASIDE FROM USIA ANGLE, BOL'SHAKOV'S PIECE IS
FAIRLY STOCK REHASH OF THEMES ENUNCIATED BY SEVERAL
WRITERS (INCLUDING BOL'SHAKOV HIMSELF) IN EARLY
SPRING. APPEARANCE OF THIS ARTICLE, HOWEVER, AS
MAJOR ITEM IN PRAVDA RATHER THAN ON TASS EXTERNAL WIRE
OR IN OTHER PAPERS SUCH AS VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA OR
EVEN LITERATURNAYA GAZETA INDICATES HIGH OFFICIAL IMPRIMATUR
ON BOL'SHAKOV'S THESIS, WHICH IS MUCH MORE REMINISCENT
OF SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD USIA TEN YEARS AGO RATHER THAN
IN POST-1972 ERA.

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